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April 7, 2004

To: Supervisor Don Knabe, Chairman  
Supervisor Gloria Molina  
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Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky  
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

From: David E. Janssen   
Chief Administrative Officer

**REPORT ON CONTRACT TRAINING AND CONTINUING EDUCATION FOR  
COUNTY CONTRACT MANAGEMENT STAFF AND THE DEPARTMENT OF  
HEALTH SERVICES CONTRACTING FUNCTIONS**

On February 17, 2004, on motion by Supervisor Knabe, your Board instructed my office, in consultation with the Directors of Health Services and Personnel, and other affected departments, to report back on the status of an earlier Board request to provide contract training and continuing education to all County personnel engaged in contract functions, including the Department of Health Services (DHS) Contract and Grants Division's participation in the County's Contract Staff Recruitment and Training Project. In addition, we were instructed to report on a work plan and timelines for improving and stabilizing the contracting operations within DHS.

Contract Training and Continuing Education

On April 24, 2001, on motion by Supervisor Knabe, your Board instructed my office and the Director of Personnel to create a workgroup, composed of contract managers from County departments, to develop, among other things, a County certification program for contract staff and managers and a plan to provide ongoing continuing education for all contract staff and managers. In response to that motion, the Director of Personnel, in conjunction with my office, the Internal Services Department and other County departments, have developed several programs to assist County employees working in contracts management, administration and monitoring functions.

In March 2002, as part of the Los Angeles County Training Academy, the Department of Human Resources (DHR) began offering a 2-day contracts workshop, "Orientation to Basic Principles of County Contracting." This workshop consists of classroom instruction, lecture and group exercises, and is targeted for Program Managers and line staff assigned to contracting functions, including contract administration, monitoring, and/or compliance. Initially, the workshops were offered weekly and then bi-weekly in order to meet the initial target audience. The workshops are now offered on a quarterly basis. In the two years since its inception, 39 sessions have been conducted and 983 County employees have participated in this training, including 158 staff from DHS.

In September 2002, DHR began its "Contract Manager and Analyst Certificate Program," a certificate program which is offered on an annual basis and includes 100 hours of class work during the 3-month course. This program targets employees who currently manage or perform contract analyst functions in a department's centralized contracting unit on a day to day basis. Participants learn County specific contracting policies and practices, including legal contracting authority, specific solicitation practices and contract approval procedures. Thus far, this certificate program has been offered to two groups of County employees, for a total of 38 participants, including six DHS staff involved in contracts administration at various DHS facilities/programs and the Health Services Administration (HSA) Contracts and Grants Division.

In addition to these Training Academy offerings, other contract training sessions have been provided specifically to DHS staff, including a special training provided by County Counsel staff in August 2002 which focused on DHS specific contract issues. This training involved 35 DHS staff from the HSA Contracts and Grants Division, Office of AIDS Programs and Policy and Alcohol and Drug Programs Administration. In addition, a 3-hour training was offered to 20 DHS employees in September 2003, which focused on developing statements of work and contract deliverables. Further, in order to assist DHS in its effort to streamline a portion of its contracting workload, ISD staff provided training to DHS employees in February 2004 on developing Master Agreements for health related services.

The Department will continue to encourage participation in DHR-sponsored contract training programs by DHS staff involved in contract operations, both at the various DHS facilities/programs and the HSA Contracts and Grants Division. The Department is also continuing to work with County Counsel to develop additional training opportunities on specific, health related contracting issues in order to strengthen the knowledge base of DHS staff.

### Health Services Contracts and Grants Division

Notwithstanding DHS efforts to date, a major challenge for the Department has been addressing key vacancies in the Division, including the primary position of Contracts and Grants Director, which has been vacant since last fall. As your Board is aware, DHS recently filled that position, effective March 16, 2004. Since that time, DHS has developed an initial work plan for improving and stabilizing their contracting operations, including the key elements and timeline noted below. As the Contracts and Grants Director becomes more familiar with the Division's day to day operations and with the contracting operations at the other DHS facilities/programs, DHS will continue to expand the work plan as needed to accomplish its overall objectives.

First and most importantly, DHS is expediting its internal recruitment and exam processes, with assistance from my office and DHR staff, to address a vacancy factor of approximately 35 percent or 15 vacant staff positions in the Division. It is their intent to have candidates identified and the majority of these positions filled by July 1, 2004.

Over the next two weeks, DHS will finalize their review of the organizational structure for the HSA Contracts and Grants Division, implementing changes as needed and ensuring that current staff are placed in the appropriate positions and at the appropriate levels. The Department is also continuing to work with DHR staff as part of the countywide review of contract management classifications in order to accomplish this task.

No later than September 2004, the Contract and Grants Director will begin bi-monthly meetings with contract liaisons at DHS facilities/programs and HSA Contracts and Grants Division staff to enhance communication and establish better coordination between the units on contracting issues. In addition, the Contracts and Grants Director will focus on improving the ongoing working relationship with County Counsel staff, including establishing ongoing meetings to address health related contract issues as they arise and the need for continuing training for new and current Contract and Grants Division staff.

By December 2004, DHS will complete a review and revamping of the internal policies and procedures manual for the Contracts and Grants Division. This manual will ensure that contract development guidelines and standard contract provisions and references are readily available as a resource for staff and that they are applied in a consistent manner.

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Shortly after that review is completed, the Contracts and Grants Division will begin publishing the manual on the DHS Intranet as a resource for all DHS employees involved with contract management activities. This is essential as the new DHS Contracts and Grants Director has been asked to establish as a priority the standardization of the contracting practices across all DHS operations. Particular attention is being paid to integrating contract solicitations to ensure that the scope and terms for contracts are consistent among the DHS facilities and processed in a way which ensures efficiency and avoids duplication.

By April 2005, DHS plans to complete its development of an automated system for tracking contract information, which will ensure compliance with Board-ordered requirements for contract tracking and monitoring.

If you have questions or need additional information, please contact me or your staff may contact Sheila Shima of my office at (213) 974-1160 or Irene Riley, DHS Contracts and Grants Director, at (213) 240-7723.

DEJ:DL  
SAS:bjs

c: Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors  
County Counsel  
Director of Health Services  
Director of Personnel  
Director, Internal Services Department